

Town Meeting



Reg. U. S. Pat. Off.

BULLETIN OF AMERICA'S TOWN MEETING OF THE AIR

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Reg. U. S. Pat. Off.

How Can We Find Peace of Mind in This Atomic Age?

Moderator, GEORGE V. DENNY, JR.

Speakers

JOSHUA LOTH LIEBMAN

GEORGE D. STODDARD

Interrogator

HOUSTON PETERSON

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COMING

—January 27, 1948—

Should the President's Tax Plan Be Adopted?

—February 3, 1948—

Is Big Business Too Big?

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BULLETIN OF AMERICA'S TOWN MEETING OF THE AIR

GEORGE V. DENNY, JR., MODERATOR



JANUARY 20, 1948

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How Can We Find Peace of Mind in This Atomic Age?

Moderator Denny:

Good evening, neighbors. This is going to be a very personal program tonight as our speakers are going to deal with problems deep down in the personalities of everyone of us. You know it's a common characteristic of all animals to try to be comfortable.

Have you ever watched a cat walk around in circles on a pillow in order to get in the most comfortable position? I'm sure you've noticed how a dog carefully adjusts his legs and his head to be comfortable as he lies down before the fire to take a nap.

We human animals change positions constantly during the night in order to be physically comfortable while we sleep.

For a great many centuries, mankind was concerned largely with the attainment of physical comfort. He directed most of his energies to securing a more comfortable environment for his body, but while he was engaged in this quest for material comfort he became

more and more skilled in creating weapons that destroyed the physical comfort as well as the lives of fellow human beings, whom he had chosen to call his enemies.

Now we have the modern airplane which can carry food or bombs at supersonic speed, a radio that can be used to promote peace and understanding among men, or to promote strife and warfare. To climax all this, we have atomic power which could be used to bring health and prosperity to all mankind, or it may be used to bring death and destruction to what we optimistically call civilization.

So in the middle of the 20th century, in the third year of the Atomic Age, we find ourselves very uncomfortable in mind and spirit, in the grip of fear. Not even the richest man in the world can buy protection from atomic warfare. Not even the strongest nation in the world can protect all of its citizens from a lightning attack unless we can find some

way to bring this new power of destruction under absolute control.

Well, Rabbi Liebman, have I exaggerated? Is that the situation as you understand it, Dr. Stoddard? If so, gentlemen, how can we find peace of mind in this atomic age?

I know that our friend, Dr. Houston Peterson, will have many questions to put to you before the evening is over, and our audience, both here in Town Hall and those seated more or less comfortably in their homes, would like some help on these momentous questions.

As many of you know, Rabbi Joshua Loth Liebman of the Temple Israel in Boston, has written a book on this subject which has been on the best-seller list for nearly two years. It's the kind of book that nearly everyone can read and understand, but, like any book that challenges the status quo, it is subject to debate and discussion. We are happy indeed to welcome to Town Hall this evening this vigorous young Rabbi who was born in Hamilton, Ohio, in 1907; graduated from the University of Cincinnati in 1926, took post-graduate work in the universities of Palestine, Harvard, and Columbia, and was ordained a Rabbi at Hebrew Union College in 1930. Dr. Liebman. (*Applause.*)

Rabbi Liebman:

My friends, Mr. Denny has stated the issues quite clearly and vividly. Of course, we're not going

to deal tonight with physical comfort, but with emotional and mental stability and adjustment. The great goal both of religion and of psychology at their best is to lead us to an inner serenity and an inner maturity that will make us friends rather than enemies of justice and peace.

Now there's a good deal of panic among Americans today about economic insecurity and atomic war. A panicky mind is a menace as far as wise planning and thinking are concerned, just as a mind with blinkers on, retreating from unpleasant reality, is a hindrance.

Today, we need neither hysteria nor complacency but the well-balanced mind that is able to face dangers without caving in before them. Such a mind, I think, is the product of inner tranquillity.

Many people, depressed and pessimistic, think that the trouble is with the world, while often the main trouble lies within ourselves in our own unsolved conflicts, fears, and hates. If we are at war with ourselves, we can never write a peace pact for society.

I would not deny for a moment the real difficulties and dangers of our times—inflation, possible depression, group tensions, hunger abroad and, above all, the threat of atomic destruction. Economic and social democracy can solve many of these problems, and man, who has learned to tame his destructive and aggressive impulses

within the smallest circle of the city, state, and nation, can, I believe, create a world law and a limited world government before it is too late.

I'm a provisional optimist then on psychological grounds. I just do not believe that mankind wishes to commit collective suicide, that any death wish has overtaken the human species. The life wish is still triumphant and will yet compel men and nations to build the world government, for example, so brilliantly described by Cord Meyer, Jr., in his recent book, *Peace or Anarchy*.

The tensions in our age will continue to be enormously great. That is why we need more mature minds than ever before, instead we are suffering from emotional immaturity everywhere. Why?

Well, we all carry our infancies with us, our whole past histories, and many of us are still fighting the emotional battles of twenty, or forty, or sixty years ago. Every child, while possessing many wonderful potential qualities of love and generosity, is at the same time greedy, envious of his family rivals, afraid of his inevitable inner angers.

Notice how these childish fears and moods reappear in adult form in the areas of economics and politics, all dressed up, of course, in smart garments of rationalization. So often we want greedily to take in, and do not know how to share our values and goods. Or

we hate our rivals or fear them, hence the quite irrational battle at times between management and labor. Or we cloak ourselves in the garments of righteousness, looking at other nations as the embodiment of total evil, without realizing that we've carried over into our adult years many of our own unsolved, infantile hostilities which we project then into groups, religions, classes, nations.

The absolute psychological necessity of our age is to grow up emotionally.

How can we attain that emotional maturity, that balanced peace of mind in any kind of age, atomic or otherwise?

As for myself, I believe we require a proper interpretation of life, a proper perspective about life, a proper commitment to life. We need to understand our own weaknesses and shortcomings, and likewise to accept the weaknesses of our neighbors, other men, and nations.

We must understand that often we ask the impossible of life—too much love from everybody, too little frustration, or the attainment of absurd goals of power, prestige, success.

The truth is that life is hard and often defeating. There are no absolutes. Perfection is an illusion. The adult world partially accepts us and partially rejects us. There just are no secure guarantees in this precarious human adventure.

Proper perspective means the

insight that moods of depression, from time to time, are normal for a sensitive organism like man. It also means the attainment of a true tolerance for ourselves, with our angers as well as with our abilities.

We gain perspective when we accept the truth that every normal person is aggressive occasionally, that we are all of us a little peculiar at times, and that we can and must learn to love ourselves properly as well as love our neighbors compassionately; that the goal of life is dynamic growth, not static perfection.

In the third place, mature inner serenity demands high ethical commitments. You and I have to cease being clamoring infants, or ruthlessly competitive adolescents and become adult patrons of life. Interestingly enough, the most serene personalities that I know are the morally strong and the saintly, who do not always cry to the world, "Give me, give me, give me," but who know how to give to the world; who work in the direction of greater truth and social goodness without demanding the final happy ending in their own day.

Actually, you and I will find more peace of mind in working for a better social order with freedom for men of all races, creeds, and colors, than we'll ever find in an anxious brooding and hoarding of present possessions and goods. A certain careless moral rapture is

needed to give life its ultimate flavor.

Psychological wisdom is indispensable now. Even war, which after all is no earthquake but a man-made catastrophe, can be stopped by men and nations coming to understand the deep inner drives and the need for security and status for all. But psychology alone is not enough. A noble religion consecrated to the good life of this earth is equally essential for a mature peace of mind.

We cannot accept with equanimity, the verdict of Nietzsche that God is dead. If there is no God, no power greater than man, then we do feel lost and forlorn—alien wandering forever amidst unrighteousness. Not a childish religion but a mature faith is prerequisite.

Every morning we awaken to a universe not of our own making and although we shall never find God completely, we can discover traces of him in the stars and the snow, in the food and the sunlight in the divine resources of the intellect and the conscience which we use but he creates.

A prophetic religion can give us the goals and ends of life as psychology provides the tools for inner healing; a religion that will make us feel our dignity as partners of God, a religion which will not insist that we're hopeless sinners nor tattered beggars at the table of life, but really children of God—equally valuable children.

We can, I think, if we choose

master both nature and human nature and, through the insights of psychology and the visions of high prophetic religion, win for ourselves real peace of mind even in this atomic age. (*Applause.*)

Moderator Denny:

Thank you, Rabbi Liebman. Well, Dr. Stoddard, now it's your turn. While we can't take Dr. Liebman's statement as a substitute for his book, he has given us the essence of his ideas on this subject in the time available. So what's your opinion?

Before you became president of the University of Illinois in July, 1946, we know that you were president of the University of the State of New York and Commissioner of Education for four years prior to that time. We know of your distinguished work in the field of psychology and education at the University of Iowa. We know also that you've not confined your activities to the university campus, that you've been active as a delegate and moving spirit in the formation of UNESCO and that you are now on its executive board.

I don't know exactly how many best sellers you've written, but the title of one you published in 1943 intrigues us greatly. It is called *The Meaning of Intelligence* and we welcome your participation here tonight as we try to apply intelligence to this problem. Dr. George Stoddard. (*Applause.*)

Dr. Stoddard:

I agree with Dr. Liebman that serenity is not a smooth line. It is more like the ups and downs of a thermometer or a business enterprise. That is why serenity can be interesting. It is full of resolved and partly resolved conflicts.

To a good swimmer, it does not matter at all how deep the water is. To the insecure, the unstable, the unfit, the very thought of deep water leads to physical and emotional confusion.

Everybody gets angry, but the normal person gets over it. He does not burn as a slow fire. He does not work out his frustrations in malicious gossip or unfriendly acts. He swings back to where he belongs.

One way to increase stability is to place private against public knowledge. A serene person does not tell all—Heaven forbid a return of the recent Oxford movement. But he does share a certain amount of inner life with at least one other person. Truly in the world of thoughts and emotions, it is not good for man to live alone.

I once knew a man in Toronto who, fearing a liquor shortage, planted 8 or 10 favorite brands in his garden, neatly labeling each row. Silly, of course. In fact, it's outrageous.

Many a thought, however, if acted on, would be just as silly. Such thoughts grow unrevealed to others in the dark places of the

mind. Families, roommates, and companions serve us enormously by providing a healthy external check. In this way, some mental disturbances get cleared up fast.

Already we are getting special neuroses and hysterias charged against the atomic bomb. What kind of reactions can be considered as reasonable? Shall we run from the bomb? Well, to what safe place? Say some people, to a world without bombs. As a throwback to a world that once was, this is as foolish as liquor in the garden.

It takes a positive force to eliminate the bomb now that we have it. Hence, we seek a tiny portion of the real world as a haven. Such a plan is not abnormal. Industrial plants will go underground and the arsenals are already there. Speleology is again important as it was, minus the Greek name, 50,000 years ago.

Not to the ramparts, not to the barricades, to the caves. That is the new and the dismal slogan. This is indeed a terrible prospect but to the armed forces it makes sense. Until we and the Russians really make the United Nations come to life, it is entirely rational.

It takes two sides to make the bargain stick. When caves disgorge instead of fill up, we shall resume the all-out search for serenity.

In the meantime, maladjustment is in the air. It is no bogey conjured up by psychiatrists to in-

crease their business. They do not need any business. There is too much business now. Fifty per cent of all of the hospital beds in the United States are occupied by mental patients. People who are only peculiar are still more numerous.

As for worries, anxieties, and depressions, on occasion aren't we all guilty? As the old Quaker said to his wife, "Everybody is queer except me, and thee, and sometime I think thee acts a little strange. (Laughter.)

Any person that is frustrated and over-criticized may go toward the neurotic escape. He makes a closed world of his own, a veritable cocoon in which he is master. In this inner life, everybody serves the one ego. Tension comes when something from outside jolts hard into this unhealthy center.

Something usually does break in sooner or later. It may be only a wool-gathering student brought up sharp by the approach of examinations. It may be the first trip alone, the first date, marriage, or getting a job. All new experiences involve emotional growing pains.

Everybody worries a little, sweats a little, feels upset no matter how convincing the outward calm. The thing to do is to go through with the assignment.

Confidence comes through two basic discoveries: First, people are much alike with common fears; and, second, the trial run brings new courage.

Of course, the neurotic thinks otherwise. Nobody understands him. He withdraws into himself. He peoples his world with imaginary persons and events. Sometimes Hitler-like, he is able to take over a small sector of the world and put himself across in it.

We smile at the picture of the downtrodden man who reigns like a king in his own home. In the old days, he used to beat his wife and frighten his children.

A neurotic individual, then, is dominated by fear and anxiety. Perhaps he is not more afraid of snakes, floods, or fires than other people. He is not as simple as that. At the root of his behavior there's a deep feeling of inadequacy. He is not sure of himself. To use a slang expression that has a good deal to commend it, the neurotic can't take it. He fails to grow up.

Often the modern teacher is the first to discover the symptoms. Contrary to popular opinion, the old-fashioned schoolroom was no cure for such ailments. It only looks good from a distance. It is the tight-lipped, tense schoolmarm in a carefully arranged schoolroom working from page to page on itemized materials who teaches children the least.

The chief lesson that flows from all these little memorized packets is that you must not be yourself. You must not express yourself. You must postpone gaiety in the vague promise of a happy future.

Such a teacher postpones her life, too. She learns what her pupils learn. Her life is shadowy and dry, and she will come out the driest one of the whole lot.

You may say, well what of it? Why is not that kind of life as good as any other?

The answer is that such a life is defective and futile. It is hardly worth fighting all our wars for. It leads to a tremendous piling up of nervous difficulties.

Similarly, we must be watchful in the home. The strict disciplinarian may really be punishing the child instead of trying to bring the child up right. The over-solicitous mother is more guilty of self love than of child love. To smother a child in affection is a mark of adult immaturity, but of genuine love, friendship, and respect, there can never be too much.

Accordingly, we must face reality. We must be social. We must like other people and learn to live with them. We must cease to fool ourselves with elaborate tricks like perfectionism, pseudo-illness, and a reversion to infantile tactics.

I think it would help if each person developed some special usefulness. Everybody, child or adult, needs a small niche in the world that he can fill better than anybody else. He needs to be wanted. (*Applause.*)

Moderator Denny:

Thank you, Dr. Stoddard. It's customary at this point to have a

brief discussion among our speakers before we go into the audience for questions, or to have some questions by expert interrogators.

Tonight, we have one expert interrogator whom you have heard many times on this program as a guest moderator. He is Houston Peterson, for eight years head of the famous Cooper Union Forum in New York City, author of several books on philosophy, and now a professor of philosophy at Rutgers University. Well, Dr. Peterson, will you step up and assume your platonic role here and ask

some questions of these gentlemen? (*Applause.*)

Dr. Peterson:

Thank you, Mr. Denny. Ladies and gentlemen, it's obvious that Mr. Denny and his staff have given us one of the oldest of issues, one of the most enduring of human issues, although we have dolleed up the title a little bit with a reference to the Atomic Age. For thousands of years, philosophers, religious sages, and psychologists have talked about peace of mind, although Dr. Liebman, perhaps

THE SPEAKERS' COLUMN

JOSHUA LOTH LIEBMAN — Rabbi of the Temple Israel in Boston, Dr. Liebman is the author of the best-seller, *Peace of Mind*, which was chosen the religious book of the month for May, 1946. Born in Hamilton, Ohio, in 1907, he is a graduate of the University of Cincinnati and the Hebrew Union College. He has also been a student at Hebrew University in Palestine, Harvard, and Columbia.

Before he was ordained as a Rabbi in 1930, he was a tutor of German and a lecturer in Greek philosophy at the University of Cincinnati. From 1930 to 1934, he was the holder of the Leo W. Simon Traveling Fellowship in Philosophy. For seven years he was national radio preacher on Message of Israel over N.B.C. and A.B.C.

Dr. Liebman has lectured and preached widely in universities and churches in eastern United States. During the war he served on the Committee on Army and Navy Religious Activities and is active in many Jewish educational and religious groups.

In addition to *Peace of Mind*, he is the author of several other books and magazine articles.

GEORGE DINSMORE STODDARD — After serving as Commissioner of Education for New York State from 1942 to 1945, Dr. Stoddard became president of the University of Illinois in July, 1946.

Dr. Stoddard was born in Carbondale, Pa., in 1897. With an A.B. from Pennsylvania State College, a diploma from the

University of Paris, and a Ph.D. from the University of Iowa, he became an associate in psychology and education at the University of Iowa. By 1941 he was a full ranking professor. Dr. Stoddard was also Director of the Iowa Child Welfare Research Station from 1928 to 1941 and from 1936 to 1942 was Dean of the Graduate College.

In 1942, Dr. Stoddard went to New York as president of the University of the State of New York and Commissioner of Education.

A veteran of World War I, Dr. Stoddard is the author of many educational publications.

HOUSTON PETERSON — Educator, author, lecturer, and radio broadcaster, Dr. Peterson is a professor of philosophy at Rutgers University where he has been a member of the staff since 1929. Born in Fresno, California, in 1897, he attended Pomona College in Claremont where he graduated with an A.B. degree in 1919. The following year he received an A.M. from Columbia and several years later received a Ph.D. from the same university.

Dr. Peterson has also been on the faculty of Cooper Union since 1938. Before that he was chairman of the Cooper Union Forum for several years. He has lectured widely and is heard over the air frequently as an educational broadcaster.

Beside being the editor of a number of books on poetry and related subjects, Dr. Peterson is the author of several books.

is the first shrewd enough to put that in the title. Even if it hadn't been a good book, the title would have sold it, of course. (*Laughter.*)

I should remind you, of course, of not only philosophers but doctors and teachers writing on this subject. You know, a teacher knows a little but knows where to find the rest.

Spinoza, in his last two books of his great *Ethics*, talked about peace of mind.

Mr. Somerset Maugham lifted the title "Of Human Bondage" from Spinoza's *Ethics*.

I should say also that one of the great addresses of William Osler dealt with equanimity — *Aequanimitas*, his great farewell lecture at Pennsylvania.

Of course, after any great world catastrophe, after the Black Death, after the Napoleonic Wars, after the Civil War, after the first World War, there was a peculiar and insistent search after peace of mind. I mention all these things just to show that we are not unique in our attempt to escape from anxiety.

Now I have three or four questions to put to these gentlemen. Occasionally I am asked, "Why seek peace of mind now? I am so sensitive, I am perhaps a genius, and therefore, I can't seek peace of mind with the world so agonized as it is."

Dr. Liebman, what should we reply to these sensitive people?

Dr. Liebman: I think that now

there's a great danger of many people feeling that pain is equivalent to profundity and that sanity is to be equated with superficiality. Quite the reverse. As I said in my address, I'm quite convinced that we're never going to have a peaceful social world as long as we have agonized and anxious individuals. (*Applause.*)

Dr. Peterson: I think Dr. Stoddard would like to add something to that.

Dr. Stoddard: I have a feeling Dr. Liebman was talking about a rather fashionable neurosis. Out in the West, you know, there aren't quite so many words—there's more three dimensional work—and there I have a feeling that they may achieve a false peace of mind by not being sufficiently alert, by not having enough nervous antennae out, as it were, so we have both extremes. (*Applause.*)

Dr. Peterson: Thank you, Dr. Stoddard. There's another more basic question. Perhaps both of these gentlemen dwelt on the fact that our anxieties, our present agonies, are not due to Russia, merely, or the atomic bomb. Those are both scapegoats, in a way. It may shock you a little bit. I confess that when Americans hear the word "Russia" they either see red or turn green. (*Laughter and applause.*) And neither of those courses or those colors is conducive to peace of mind.

But in all seriousness, since as

these gentleman say, and all psychologists say, our agonies, our anxieties, our troubles date back to the early years of life, indeed to the first six years, how are we to disseminate this great and fruitful modern knowledge that's really grown up within fifty years?

Dr. Liebman: I believe that it is very possible in our time because we are the first generation possessing this knowledge, this deep inner knowledge, coming to us from psychology, and psychiatry, and social psychology, and anthropology. We can look with hope, not merely to a diagnosis of our anxieties and anguish as in previous generations, but this is why I'm confident that man, if he is wise enough, can attain peace of mind on a new dimension today, utilizing the expert resources when necessary, and utilizing all of the media of communication—radio, such as this radio tonight, and all of the school systems of our country, and the educational facilities—to make available the basic principles of mental health by which parents today can create in the coming generation not the neuroses but the morale needed for facing the future and mastering it. (*Applause.*)

Mr. Denny: Thank you, Dr. Liebman. Now, Dr. Stoddard?

Dr. Stoddard: I can't really disagree with Dr. Liebman on that. We're always so grateful for a little boost in the field of education. But it's certainly true that

parents and teachers, too, at times have been rather expert in creating maladjustments, neuroses, and psychoses. I'm wondering if we couldn't get a negative sign on that creative ability. It gives us hope to think that since we have so much influence on the young child, that the influence could be beneficent. But, as Dr. Liebman says, we need to know much more than we do now. (*Applause.*)

Dr. Peterson: It's well-known that we have far more people in the mental beds of our hospitals than in the so-called physical beds. There'll never be enough psychiatrists or mental consultants to go around. I would like to make a revolutionary suggestion that may get me, if not this program, thrown off the air, but I think it's a good one. I have not consulted Mr. Denny on this.

Mr. Denny: We are not responsible for what you say. Houston, go right ahead. (*Laughter.*)

Dr. Peterson: That is true, signed six papers approving that nobody's responsible but me. (*Laughter.*) Well, I'm going to be irresponsible. I share this with you, ladies and gentlemen. Think if modern psychology, at its very best, with the dramatic and sensitive way that Dr. Stoddard and Dr. Liebman understand it, could be made the content of soap operas instead of soap, what would we have? (*Applause.*)

Dr. Stoddard: The first thing

we would have would be a lot of dirty children, I suppose. (*Laughter and applause.*) But I share the view that we don't have to be psychologists and certainly we don't have to be psychiatrists to know something about it. Each in his own way, each adult, each parent, and each teacher should have some access to what you might call the popular regions of such work and apply them in practice.

Dr. Peterson: I have another question to give to these gentlemen who have such great confidence in psychology. They and thousands are giving their lives to it. Well, if psychology is as important as they say, if it gives us the means as well as the ends in many respects, to fruitful living and peace of mind, why shouldn't psychologists be in some of the higher echelons of government? (*Applause.*)

I say this in deadly seriousness—why shouldn't there be a social psychologist in the Cabinet to say, "Gentlemen, these measures you are proposing are anthropologically and psychologically absurd."

Why shouldn't there be a social psychologist in the Senate, saying, "Gentlemen, don't you see the impact of this on South America"—or on the Near East, or something of that sort? It would be a great help, I think. (*Applause.*)

But I'm not supposed to answer my own question. I'm here as an ignorant questioner. Dr. Liebman.

Dr. Liebman: I think that Dr. Peterson's comments are really revolutionary in the finest sense of the term revolutionary. Certainly I would agree wholeheartedly with his last suggestion. I believe we need psychological experts in the Senate and in the Cabinet. I certainly believe, for example, just as we have great economic experts and legal experts attending international conferences and advising, for example, our Secretary of State, it would be a magnificent step forward to have great social psychiatrists, experts in the field of human motivation, go with all our men in the State Department when they try to achieve peace.

When we will have social psychiatrists bringing their knowledge to bear upon what are the neuroses of our own people and the neuroses of other nations and other governments, we may be on the step toward a genuine peace. (*Applause.*)

Mr. Denny: Thank you, Dr. Liebman. Now we have about 1,500 very normal people out here who want to ask a lot of questions about abnormal people. While we get ready for that question period, I am sure that you, our listeners, will be interested in the following message.

Announcer: You are listening to "America's Town Meeting of the Air" originating in Town Hall, New York, where we are discussing the question, "How Can We Find Peace of Mind in This

Atomic Age?" We are about to take questions from the audience. If you would like a copy of tonight's discussion, complete with the questions and answers to follow, you may secure one by sending 10c to Town Hall, New York 18, New York. If you would like to have the next eleven issues of our Town Meeting Bulletin starting with this week, enclose \$1.00; for twenty-six issues, enclose \$2.35; or for a full year, enclose \$4.50. Remember the address, Town Hall, New York 18, New York. And please allow about two weeks for delivery.

Last week we received many interesting letters from thousands of you who have organized Town Meeting discussion groups or clubs

and we are beginning to compile the results. If you haven't already written in to tell us about your group, won't you do so tonight or as soon as possible.

People are constantly asking us how many Town Meeting discussion groups there are. Frankly, we don't know and we can't tell unless you first tell us. If you are one of those who enjoy Town Meeting regularly, but haven't as yet organized a Town Meeting discussion group of your own, why not start one next week? We will be very happy to send you many suggestions if you will write to us at Town Hall, New York 18, New York.

Now for our question period we return you to Mr. Denny.

QUESTIONS, PLEASE!

Mr. Denny: Now we are ready for the audience questions. We'll take this gentleman in the red tie first.

Man: This question is addressed to Dr. Stoddard. Dr Stoddard, are material sacrifices of foremost necessity in striving for peace of mind in this Atomic Age or is just the mind involved?

Dr. Stoddard: Oh, I don't think we can really separate the mind from the body or from the emotions. What Dr. Liebman has been trying to point out is that all these things are tied in together; that physical, emotional, and men-

tal health are all really a part of one piece.

Mr. Denny: Thank you. The gentleman on the center aisle, here.

Man: This is to Dr. Liebman. Your book has a program for the individual. Have you a program for peace of mind for society?

Dr. Liebman: That would be too ambitious a question to try to answer tonight, and I would say just very briefly that, as I indicated in my address, I believe that we have to achieve this individual integration at the same time being fully aware of the

social dangers and the social conflicts in our age.

Mr. Denny: Thank you. The lady here.

Lady: A question for Dr. Peterson. Shall we deny the superiority of consciousness over material things — that principle expressed in the 91st Psalm—the control of destiny through the mind?

Dr. Peterson: I think this question is really connected with the very first one about are we to treat the mind without relation to material things. I'd like to tie them up together. I believe in a limited amount of free will. I wouldn't be here talking if I didn't think human consciousness, human ideas, could influence other people and, in turn, material things. I think that science is our guiding instrument in that respect, madam.

Going back to this other question, of course, the gentleman is quite right when he says that we are isolating purely mental or psychological from material things rather arbitrarily tonight. We are not economists or authority on politics. They cannot be sharply separated, and, believe me, most people are depressed in this country these days not because of Russia or the atomic bomb, but because they are worried about a forthcoming depression. Depression means psychological depression. That's what they're worried about. *(Applause.)*

Mr. Denny: Do you want to

add something to that, Dr. Stoddard?

Dr. Stoddard: No.

Mr. Denny: All right. The gentleman up in the balcony.

Man: My question is addressed to Dr. Liebman. What effect may the moderate drinking of good liquor be expected to have on peace of mind? *(Laughter.)*

Dr. Leibman: I must say that I'm no authority on good liquor, or any other kind of liquor. In this connection, I am reminded of the night when I was a very young student at college and was on the debating team, debating against Oxford University, England, on the subject of prohibition. My whole speech was ruined when I'd spoken on the dangers of drink—I was sixteen years old then—when the captain of the Oxford debating team got up and in his rebuttal said, "I think that the speaker, Mr. Liebman, knows nothing whatsoever personally from experience of the danger of drink." *(Laughter.)*

Mr. Denny: I wonder if any of the other two gentlemen on the platform care to comment on this question? *(Laughter.)*

Dr. Peterson: Yes, I don't think this question should be abandoned entirely, and thrown to the negative. A great ancestor of mine, General Sam Houston, from whom I get my first name, was known among the Indians of the border of Tennessee and Texas as "Big Drunk." He was drunk for two

years hand running, and he became President and then Governor of Texas. Now I don't recommend that, especially as there are no territories lying around the United States. But in all seriousness, one of the oldest Greek Gods, a great factor in the whole of the Greek mythology was Bacchus, or Dionysus, the God of wine, of enthusiasm, of intoxication. Incidentally, the Greeks drank wine highly flavored with water. To wipe out a Greek Diety is always, not only a problem for the moralist to consider, but for the psychologist. And some times, I think the prohibitionists don't worry about the psychology of their quest. (*Applause.*)

Mr. Denny: Thank you, Dr. Peterson, for coming to the rescue. Now the gentleman on the second row there.

Man: My question is directed to Dr. Stoddard. Do you believe a return to the philosophy and psychology of Scholasticism, as taught by Thomas Aquinas, and our contemporaries, Jacques Maritain and Professor Adler, would help us today?

Dr. Stoddard: I think I'd better express my personal view on that question. I know Jacques Maritain and had the great privilege of two weeks of close contact with him in Mexico City only last month. I think he is a marvelous person, one of the world's great personalities. But frankly, I think that whole philosophy of Scholasticism

is for the very few persons. I don't think it will carry much weight in the broad American democracy. I don't think it can be restored along philosophical or religious lines but I know other people differ from me, and I respect their opinions.

Mr. Denny: Thank you. Maybe Dr. Liebman differs. I see him rising up on his feet.

Dr. Liebman: No, on that point also I agree with Dr. Stoddard. I took my doctor's degree in the field of medieval scholastic philosophy, Hebrew philosophy, Maimonides. I have been greatly impressed with much of the contribution both of Maimonides and Thomas Aquinas.

I just do not think that we can progress, in our time, without the insight, let us say, in the realm of the physical science of an Einstein or in the psychological realm of a Freud. We have to go on from where we are now toward the future.

Mr. Denny. Thank you. The lady here.

Lady: I have a question for Dr. Liebman. I wish to know how we can find peace of mind when the Russian people are being convinced by their government that war with the United States is inevitable, and we are prevented from reaching the Russian people through censorship?

Mr. Denny: That's almost a political question, but it has psy-

chological implications, so go ahead.

Dr. Liebman: In answer to that question, I would say that, in my own judgment, of course, we cannot influence directly, perhaps even indirectly, at this moment, the Russian people, or the Russian Government. We have to begin with ourselves, with the American people. I think that as we achieve our own maturity emotionally, intellectually, we will achieve a greater democracy and decency here at home, and an example of democracy throughout the world, and the Russian people will also come to understand that we do not want war and we will not tolerate war. (*Applause.*)

Man: I'd like to direct this to Dr. Stoddard. Is peace of mind, briefly, finding something to live for?

Dr. Stoddard: I think that's a very good definition. Peace of mind is something that is worthwhile to live for, something that will enlist our sense of responsibility, our direction toward the highest values, and our fundamental enthusiasm. I think the boy really has his mind right down the right track. (*Applause.*)

Mr. Denny: Thank you. The man in the balcony.

Man: Will a Marshall Plan for America as well as other underprivileged people help promote universal peace of mind?

Mr. Denny: Oh, I'm sorry. That is a political question, definitely.

We want the questions here on the subject under discussion. That is a political question. We discussed that last week, you know. All right, the lady right here.

Lady: My question is to Dr. Liebman. Can we achieve mass emotional maturity when so much of radio, movies, and journalism aims to keep us at a twelve-year level, namely, unstable adolescence? (*Applause.*)

Dr. Liebman: I would thoroughly agree with you that many of the mass media reaching the American people first of all underestimate the intelligence of the American people — greatly underestimate the intelligence and the psychological needs of the American people. I happen profoundly to disagree with much of the violence and the aggression manifested in the radio programs for children as well as for adults. I think that it is high time for all the responsible agencies in our country for education, mass media and otherwise, to respect the dignity of the individual and the intelligence of the mass of America. (*Applause.*)

Mr. Denny: Dr. Peterson?

Dr. Peterson: I just wanted to add a note here. In the radio, in the newspapers, in the movies, there's a violence, a harshness, a lack of gentleness that runs beyond the ordinary limits of human nature. Years ago, an English psychologist, speaking of our modern mind, spoke of a "taboo

on tenderness." A taboo on tenderness. I think it's a rather fine phrase that's never been reprinted in this country. It seems to me that if people were not ashamed to be tender, not only in their homes but among one another, we would provide that democracy that we talk about verbally so much. (*Applause.*)

Mr. Denny: Thank you, Dr. Peterson. I don't want to let this opportunity go by without telling the vast radio audience, as well as those of you who are here, that, so far as radio is concerned, the audience gets about what it deserves. The people who write in and express themselves and ask for certain types of programs have a tremendous influence. You who want better types of programs just don't write in.

Those of us who make the programs, I assure you, pay a great deal of attention to what you, the people, have to say. That's how we produce programs and, if you want better programs, then let the people know, and you'll get better programs. But if you just gripe and don't take the trouble to communicate to the right people, then it's a waste of time. All right. The next question, please.

Man: I should like to speak with Dr. Stoddard. You claim that education is essential for the neurotic. Why then are our mental institutions so miserably understaffed and why isn't this situation being remedied? (*Applause.*)

Dr. Stoddard: That's a double barreled question. In the first place, we haven't had too keen a recognition of the problems of mental hygiene and psychiatry. It's rather a new profession and therefore as we know, it takes a long time to be a psychiatrist.

Also, our modern methods of diagnosis have revealed much more anxiety, much more hysteria than the older doctors ever felt. They would have to contend with that. Just at the time when we know there's so much to do, we discover we've had a tremendous shortage in every branch of medicine. I think we will not in our generation be able to take care of the mental needs in institutions and outside of institutions in the proper way. All I can say is we're doing our best and if you people want to be helpful, and you know you want to be, you can press your public leaders, your legislatures, and your boards of trustees of educational institutions to do something about these great medical and psychiatric lacks. (*Applause.*)

Lady: I address my question to Dr. Liebman. What effect will the Atomic Age have on the cultural arts? What is the responsibility of artists to society? Which is the most effective, creative or destructive results of this age in painting to the mind?

Mr. Denny: I haven't the faintest idea what she means and neither does Dr. Liebman. Could

you clarify that a little bit? No, don't just repeat it. Or shall we pass it up and take another one.

Lady: Well, I'll make it very simple then. Do you think our modern artists have failed in society or how can they help more in society in the Atomic Age?

Dr. Liebman: I think the Atomic Age is certainly too new for us to give any adequate answer to its effect upon the artists of the next generation. I gather that the import of the question is what effect will this particular age have upon art and how can art make its contribution?

Art, of course, has its tremendous symbolic value in making clear—where perhaps no other instrumentality can make clear to the emotions of men and women—both the conflicts and the possibilities for creative growth, productivity, and love. If you listen, for example, in New York at this present time to the superb rendition of *Medea*, the story of human jealousy as adapted by Robinson Jeffers based upon the drama of Euripedes, or you witness Dostoyevsky's great *Crime and Punishment* as portrayed in this remarkable presentation here in New York—in these are realms of art in the realm of literature and poetry.

You are touched. You are moved. You are given a certain clarification about the hungers, the guilts, the feeling of aloneness on the part of men and women in

our contemporary society. The artists of tomorrow cannot isolate themselves and dare not live in an ivory tower remote from the common concern of the common men and women everywhere. The artist, through his symbols, will have to make clear the dangers and the destructive possibilities in the human heart and the creative and also the liberating possibilities in man's inner nature. (*Applause.*)

Mr. Denny: Thank you. Now the lady in the red hat in the balcony. Will she stand up, please? Thank you.

Lady: I'd like to address this to Dr. Stoddard. Is the expression of abstractionalism in our modern art a result of lack of peace of mind in our current age?

Dr. Stoddard: I don't know whether it's a cause or a result. I think in some respects it's both. It's certainly true that some of the abstractions in art can be found in our hospitals for the insane, but I wouldn't want to draw the conclusion that they were just the same. I think the serious answer is that the artists, like everybody else, are hunting for some new ways of resolving conflict and it's natural that they should turn away from the old forms and try their creative abilities in new ones. I might say, too, that UNESCO under the leadership of Joseph Priestley are going to develop all the art forms and see if there isn't really some vehicle there that we

might miss in the more professional and standard channels.

Mr. Denny: Thank you. The gentleman on the aisle.

Man: Dr. Liebman. Which should contribute to the greatest peace of mind to know that death marks the end or that there is another life after death?

Dr. Liebman: Now on that question, I would like to say that, in the first place, all of us have to recognize, with a certain calm and a certain serenity, the inevitability of death; death as a friend of man, not merely the enemy of man; death many times coming with healing on its wings.

I think also we have to have the maturity to face the end of life as we face the problems in life; to know that every day that we live we die a little bit. The great philosophers, the great thinkers of the ages, found in the tradition which is my own tradition, the Jewish tradition, as well as in Christianity, and great philosophers and thinkers from the time of Plato down to the time of Kant and William James have asserted that the concept and the belief in immortality, personal or social, will give the greatest solace to man. *(Applause.)*

Mr. Denny: Thank you, Dr. Liebman. Now while our speakers prepare their summaries of tonight's question, here is a special message of interest to you.

Announcer: Your response to our suggestion last week that you

consult your local library to read about both sides of the Marshall Plan was most favorable. Numerous requests for material on this subject has indicated a healthy interest in our suggestion. Both librarians and listeners have welcomed the idea and we want to urge you again to ask your local librarians about the important issues program now being promoted by the American Library Association.

Your library has a wealth of material on all Town Meeting topics. You will find your librarian most anxious to help you. Special information is available for this project to promote interest in your community. To find out more about tonight's subject consult your librarian. Be sure to ask for material on both sides of the question. That is the Town Meeting way of arriving at a well thought-out conclusion. Identify yourself as a regular Town Meeting listener.

Now for the summaries of tonight's discussions, here is Mr. Denny.

Mr. Denny: Now first, may we have a word from Dr. Stoddard?

Dr. Stoddard: To sum up, yes, we have a vast amount of insecurity. We have it at home, in school, and on the job. We cannot ascribe it to the atomic threat; in fact, scarcely any of it to the bomb. Paradoxically, the atomic bomb, being a very real and convincing danger, should bring us

back to reality. It is not imaginary. It is not a private danger. It is the kind of universal trouble that ought to lead to universal cooperation. Like a ship foundering at sea, mankind needs help from those afloat. Recent efforts to help a distressed Russian ship in the Pacific were like a fresh breeze in a poisoned atmosphere.

I believe that we can harness this great atomic invention, that we can get personally prepared for a world of shared resources, a world of brotherhood. To do so, requires a new and still strange mixture of psychology and religion.

Mr. Denny: Thank you, Dr. Stoddard. Now a final word from Rabbi Liebman.

Dr. Liebman: No one today, it seems to me, should seek for a peace of mind that is morally complacent about the injustices and evils in the world. We need disturbed consciences as well as serene minds. However, there is hope today that just as the physical sciences have conquered plagues which seemed inevitable, so psychological sciences will help us to conquer the diseases of selfishness, fear, collective greed, and violence.

We today have healing insights about human nature that no previous generation possessed. We ourselves can become more mature, and thus centers of contagious emotional health for everyone around us. Mastering our own

hates and insecurities, learning how to achieve a new confidence about God and man, a new clarity about our ethical obligations to the whole human race and an unshakable resolution not to be stampeded into a third World War.

All of us live today, all nations without exception on the same street of atomic destiny. We need not despair when atomic physicists, social scientists, and prophetic religion working together can yet open the gates to a new world of light made by men always attempting the impossible and achieving it. (*Applause.*)

Mr. Denny: Thank you, Rabbi Liebman, Dr. Stoddard, Houston Peterson, for a great deal of enlightenment on this typical approach to our problems. Next week we turn to the all-important question of taxes. Since taxes play an ever-increasing role in our day-to-day expenses, since taxes may have a very marked effect on our inflation spiral, we should give more than passing interest to next week's discussion on the subject, "Should the President's Tax Plan Be Adopted?" Our speakers will be Senator Harry P. Cain, Republican of Washington; Congressman Albert Gore, Democrat of Tennessee; Mr. Leon Keyserling, lawyer, and vice chairman of President Truman's Council on Economic Advisors; and Mr. Samuel J. Lasser, tax accountant of Jamestown, New York.

